

# PEOPLE & THINGS By ATTICUS

**P**RESIDENT EISENHOWER has invited Sir Winston Churchill to send a selection of his paintings to be exhibited in America as a gesture of Anglo-American goodwill. Sir Winston, I am told, is delighted with the idea, and has agreed. Details are now being worked out.

Sir Winston has several hundred paintings at Chartwell. It is usually his practice not to sign them until they are framed and presented.

Americans who see the exhibition may be assured that they are enjoying an opportunity for which London has waited long and vainly.

Sir Winston has, of course, the rank of "Honorary Royal Academician Extraordinary" and in recent years has been a regular contributor to the Royal Academy summer exhibition. In landscape, and more especially in subjects of Mediterranean or North African inspiration, he displays not only the generous handling which goes with a generous nature but an enlightened colour-sense which is the envy of many professional painters.

## Pioneer in the Shadows

IT is in keeping with the strange story of John Baird that the recent 21st anniversary of practical television should have passed with so little acclamation to his memory. Tall, thick-set, fair-haired, he was a strange combination of modesty and Scottish determination. In this field he was far ahead of any other scientist, but the clever men said that TV was impossible or unimportant.

In desperation he arranged for a company chairman to make the annual report to his shareholders at a distance of twenty-five miles, and invited me to attend the meeting. The demonstration was completely successful and one would have thought that many company chairmen would have realised the advantage of addressing their shareholders from such a comfortable distance.

But it was not to be. He walked the weary road of discouragement and died before his time.

## Sky Carnival

THE skies were dubious as we drove towards Farnborough on the opening day of the air festival, but by the time we arrived the sun was smiling like a Parliamentary candidate who had just been adopted for a safe seat. My old friend Sir Frederick Handley-Page had invited me to lunch at his open-air club on the course, and afterwards to watch the incredible carnival of the skies.

It seems almost unbelievable that so many of the aviation pioneers are not only still



HORACE TONGE

Like some gigantic firework display, vapour trails criss-cross the London sky as 'planes converge on Farnborough.

with us but in many cases playing vital roles in the conquest of the air. Viscount Brabazon holds British Flying Certificate No. 1; nor do I apologise for repeating the old joke that he was the first certified Briton to fly.

Sir Geoffrey de Havilland and Sir A. V. Roe are magic names, yet there was tragedy as well as triumph in the dedicated work of these pioneers. Two sons of Sir Geoffrey were killed in the air—one while testing a new machine. Both Sir Alliot Verduin Roe's sons were killed in flying action during the war.

It is true that wars come to an end, but there is no respite in the peacetime battle of the skies. The manufacturers cannot rest upon their products but, like Macbeth, they must speak the pregnant words: "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow"

## Aerobatics

THE spectacle at Farnborough that afternoon passed into the realm of sheer fantasia: planes in formation flying at 700 miles an hour would pass before us in complete silence, and then there would be an angry shriek as the sound followed in its hopeless chase.

As a contrast to the dark Mother Hubbards in the sky there were shiny white-winged planes that glittered like silver. I was informed that white resists the radiation, and hasten to pass that information on.

Yet, curiously, one of the most vivid memories of that visit was the intrusion of half-a-dozen tiny birds looking like very immature planes that

flew over the course, and did some aerobatics which proved that the aeroplane designers have little to teach them.

## Living on Air

I FELT absurdly young last week. This alarming sensation was brought on by a gaily-produced but seemingly innocuous booklet called "The Student's Guide to London." It says, "Air will be sub-titled: "Living on Air in the Metropolis."

It is stuffed with essential information for the impecunious. The chapter on keeping clean opens challengingly: "Almost every third person you sit next to in a London bus, tube, or teashop never has a bath."

It then tells you how to join the ranks of the other two-thirds (fourteen borough councils provide Turkish, Russian and foam baths) most economically.

It has a charming section entitled How to Outwit London—prefaced with the warning that it will not be easy: "London is cleverer than you. For centuries people like you—eater, young, and feckless—have tried to winkle gale-force nothing out of her." It lists jazz clubs, the seedier dance halls, and rules for gatecrashing ambassadorial parties. It has a really splendid chart showing how, when and where to get the cheapest seats at every London theatre.

There is an excellent list of inexpensive Continental restaurants and an authoritative section on coffee bars. But I think my favourite was the anonymous of course entitled "How to Avoid the Law in London."

Please don't write asking me for this booklet. You can get it from the National Union of Students, 3, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1, for three shillings post free.

## Racing Start

MY non-stop young friend starting Mobs left London in a whirlwind on Thursday. A most important packet was delivered to him at the airport before he took off for the Italian Grand Prix. It contained, for his approval, 500 invitations for his wedding to Miss Katie Molson on October 7.

The list of guests, Fungio, Musso, Behra, Hawthorn, Collins, Von Trips, to pick a few at random, sounds more like a line-up at Silverstone. In fact, I hear that the drivers are going to line up—outside the church, armed not with the traditional crossed swords, but two rows of chequered flags.

## Life in London

FROM his vicarage in Wisbech Cambs, left the Rev. W. L. J. Dunkin takes me to task for my comments concerning the return of Christopher Fry from life in the countryside to London. Mr. Dunkin warns me that when Dr. Johnson said that the man who was tired of London was very different from today.

Undoubtedly, he admits, there

have been improvements in hygiene and cleanliness since the Doctor's days, but on the other hand our ancestors in London had more time to concern themselves with culture and beauty. He further adds that although Londoners suffered from diseases that are kept in check in modern times, they were at least jolly.

Having made an admirable case up to that point Mr. Dunkin, rather surprisingly says: "As I sat in the train at King's Cross Station recently, I witnessed the remarkable obsession of buying the usual evening papers, and I wonder if that is one of the joys of living in London nowadays."

I would be very sad if the obsession for newspapers ceased to exist. I subscribe to every newspaper in London, and am grateful for the trouble they take in letting me know what the world is doing with itself.

Nor should those who live in the undoubted peace and beauty of the countryside imagine that London is merely a vast overgrown Chicago. To watch a misty moon glinting on the roofs of Buckingham Palace, to walk at twilight by the Serpentine, to listen to the Thames chuckling as it passes the Terrace of the Houses of Parliament on its way to the sea.

## Bearding Bacon

THERE are times when all of us are confronted with a proposition so untenable, and yet so sincerely supported, that one can only hold up one's hands in utter astonishment. This is my own reaction after reading a number of letters in which *SUNDAY TIMES* readers not only declare their belief that Bacon wrote the plays of Shakespeare, but offer to give proof. To me the life of William Shakespeare, from Stratford to London and then on to the end is almost as clearly enunciated as the life of any Lord Mayor of London in recent times.

The argument that only an educated man could have written the histories simply does not hold water. There is not the least doubt that Shakespeare got hold of a history book and then proceeded, if you will forgive the phrase, to give them the works. In fact, the plays of Shakespeare in their sequence give us a completely convincing picture of a poet reared on the beauty of the countryside, who went to London and found expression in the theatre.

True, some of his horror plays were unworthy of him; but is there anyone who can really believe that Bacon wrote the lovely, nonsensical *Innocence of the Balcany* scene or the irresolute majesty of Hamlet's lines?

## Friend or Accuser?

It may be a little late to put Francis Bacon in the dock, but nevertheless let us do it.

Q. Lord Bacon, is it true that when you were in high disfavour, the Earl of Essex urged the Queen so earnestly to appoint you Attorney General that he antagonised Her Majesty?

A. That is true.

Q. Is it a fact that your financial plight was so desperate that Lord Essex made you a present of £1,800?

A. He did.

Q. When Lord Essex had embarked on adventures which were to end in a trial for treason did you agree to act for the prosecution?

A. I advised him against his adventures.

Q. Answer the question. Did you or did you not agree to prosecute your benefactor?

A. I did.

Q. Is it true that when the Solicitor General was making a poor case against Lord Essex you twice took it out of his hands so that you could make certain that your benefactor would be sentenced to death?

A. I did my duty as a lawyer.

Q. And as a friend?

A. I have no friends.

Q. Did you or did you not write these lines in a play called "Romeo and Juliet," and

attributed to William Shakespeare:

*But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?  
It is the East, and Juliet is the Sun!  
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief!*

A. I may have done. I cannot remember.

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The sequence of Shakespeare's plays contrives to make up an autobiography as clear as the daylight that shone on his balcony. The idea that a poet and playwright needs education other than his reading and his genius provide, is too absurd to discuss seriously. Genius conforms to no rules and has neither parentage nor progeny.

## People and Words

We all disapprove of inflation, just as we disapprove of sin. But sin is not entirely unattractive to many people.

—SIR THOMAS WILKINSON.

Many beautiful women are useless beings, but I have them at my parties instead of flowers, just is decorative.

—MISS ELISA MAXWELL.

There is nothing so open to christianism as the Arts.

—MR. CHARLES WHEELER,

President of the Royal Academy

Organisations of workmen are just as capable of throwing the weight about and grossly abusing power as organisations of capitalists.

—MR. JACK BAILEY,

Secretary of the Co-operative Party.